

March 2016



<b>Tuesday, March 15</b>	<b>Professional Day, No School</b>
<b>Friday, March 18</b>	<b>Enrollment Contracts Due</b>
<b>Wednesday, March 23</b>	<b>Berrybrook Board Meeting 7:30 pm</b>
<b>Friday, March 25</b>	<b>Good Friday, No School</b>
<b>Tuesday, March 29</b>	<b>Yoga Workshop with Kim Spires 7pm</b>

Notes from the Head of School

Work on Berrybrook's new Outdoor Classroom will begin in earnest this month! We completed the first step in the process which was to file a notice of intent with the Duxbury Conservation Commission. The project does not include any buildings or utilities, and is planned to have little impact on the existing environment, but because of its proximity to wetlands, (our brook) Berrybrook School filed a notice of intent with the Duxbury Conservation Commission. Our plan was presented at their December 15, 2015 meeting. On January 18, 2016, we received the Orders of Condition from the Town of Duxbury and the state, with no restrictions on the plans as presented. So, construction of our Outdoor Classroom, designed by *Nature Explore* that includes a gathering area, music and movement area, open area, meditative area, building area, nature art area, dirt digging area, messy materials area, a climbing area, and imagination platforms can begin! O'Connor Landscape, who has already completed a beautiful makeover of our courtyard and the slopes behind the school building will be constructing the Outdoor Classroom. Over the next few weeks there will be trucks accessing the site via our existing nature trail that is located to the far left of our property as you face the school. First, the surface of the space needs to be prepared for proper drainage and cleared of any poison ivy or other species that might interfere with safe play. Following that, the different areas will be mapped out and the appropriate surfacing will be installed. Each area will be defined with plantings, logs, or stones, and there will be a sign at each area inviting children to the activity. A small stage will be constructed with musical instruments near by, and an arrangement of low platforms will be built to inspire dramatic play. The Outdoor Classroom will expand on our nature based curriculum, and inspire our young children to be caretakers of the environment. Spending time in nature develops pro-social behavior such as respect, sharing, gratitude, cooperation, teamwork, and empathy for nature and people, all important parts of the vision, mission and values of Berrybrook School.

~ Pat Keeley

## Marching To The Beat Of Their Own Drum

Joanne LaForest

Imagine if you will a parade. You are at the parade on the sidewalk among the spectators clapping as the marching band moves along the street toward you in perfect harmony and rhythm. Your child is playing the snare drum, his sticks “rat-a-tat-tatting” on the shiny instrument he carries proudly around his neck. His feet march to the rhythm of the big bass drums played by his classmates behind him. They all march in unison, never missing a beat.

Now imagine you jump out of the crowd and join him in the march! You try hard to keep up with the marching pace and stay beside him as you so desperately announce to him, “Remember, honey, that when you all turn the corner a few blocks ahead the rhythm is going to change! You’ll have to switch to that new, faster beat. Remember how it goes? I know you haven’t practiced it much yet but you will in your music lessons in a few months. It goes “Boom, boom, rat a tat tat”...get ready because it’s coming!”

Doesn’t that sound ridiculous? Of course you wouldn’t do that! Why? First of all, it is the job of the Drum Major, the leader, to whom your child is looking for direction of any musical changes. Secondly, he is in the moment of what rhythm he is to be playing presently; the changes will come when the music calls for it. He has to stay in the present moment to keep in rhythm with the entire band.

The same goes for your child at Berrybrook. With the enrollment process occurring for next year – whether it be your Beginner going to a First Year Class, your First Year child going into the Second Year program...or your Second Year child going off to kindergarten in the fall – you and your family are thinking about, discussing, and planning for “what’s next”. The only problem is that your child is practicing, and most likely enjoying, the rhythm of the class he or she is in now. They are enjoying the *rhythm* of their day: the *rhythm* of their class activities, the *rhythm* they feel from their teachers, the *rhythm* among their friendships....they are playing their own *drum* to the *rhythm* of what they know, *TODAY*.

It is so natural, and so necessary, for families to plan for what’s next. What is important to remember is that your child doesn’t need all of the information yet about a change that won’t be occurring until many months from now. When they are told now all that will be coming for them in the fall, it takes away from their “today”. They have puzzles to do! Songs to sing! Pictures to paint! Classmates to laugh with! Teachers to talk to! If we talk so much about “what’s to come” it can add worry and anxiety to their heart.

Time for us as adults often goes by fast. Time for children, because it comes more naturally to them to stay in the moment, goes much slower. Their school year next year is very far away to them, even though it feels just around the corner for parents. They’ll get to that corner of the parade eventually...and when they do they’ll have the sheet music for it. Right now they’re playing the rhythm and music called “TODAY”.

Enjoy the moment!

## Beginners News

Welcome back from a fun and relaxing February break. The teachers are finding it hard to believe that we are heading into March already! It seems like we just welcomed our Beginners to Berrybrook, and here we are. As winter winds down, we are enjoying the outdoors as much as possible and looking forward to warmer weather. Since the new year began, we have had fun with so many new things. Our housekeeping area has been transformed, becoming a hospital, veterinary office, and a post office. We have been learning about watercolors, creating a beautiful valentine heart that the children brought home for the holiday. Our class celebrated Valentine's Day with a special snack - pink rice crispy hearts. We also had a special circle time reflecting on all the people and things that we love and care about.

Spring brings new opportunities to learn and explore our natural surroundings as everything turns green! The children will be learning about the warmer weather, planting, and growing. We will also be having special visits from Miss Kim to learn some more about yoga, and a dental hygienist, Claire Reilly. She will spend some time with us talking about taking care of our teeth. We also want to remind parents that the volunteer sign up sheet is posted in the classroom. If you would like to come in and spend some time with us in the classroom, please feel free to see what dates would work for you. We are looking forward to exploring the wonders that the next month will bring!

Mrs. LaForest,  
Mrs. Piccuito  
Mrs. Fosdick  
and Mrs. Rosen



### Save the Date!

**3 and 4 Day Classes will have  
School Pictures taken  
on Tuesday April 26, 2016.**

**2 Day, 5 Day and Beginners will  
have School Pictures taken  
on Friday, April 29.**

## First Year Program News

February is the month of Love. Children and teachers explored expressions of love towards our families and friends. We created Valentine hearts by marble painting. We counted out the money to buy a stamp at school, and then bought a stamp at the Duxbury Post Office and mailed it to our family. We learned songs and played a Valentine game about sending a Valentine to our friend.

The children enjoyed playing with snow inside in our water table. We used pails and shovels, trucks and bulldozers and even painted the snow and ice.

We had lots of special visitors last month. Librarian Jessica Lamarre from the Duxbury Library came and shared books, Miss Kim came and taught us more yoga positions, and Claire Reilly, a dental hygienist, visited us. She taught us how to keep our teeth healthy and clean.

Now March is knocking on our door. Will it come in like a Lion or a Lamb? What does that mean? During this month, we begin to notice the signs that spring is on its way. We look forward to the day when

the nights have been cold, and the days are warming. Soon we will find the right day to go and tap the Maple Tree at Berrybrook. The sap will flow into a bucket hung under a spout. Then the sap will boil into maple syrup, and we will enjoy a special treat for snack!

This month, First Year students will explore themes on the weather, and different animals. Soon the warm spring breezes will bring the songbirds back to our trees, the insects, toads, and crawling creatures back to the nooks and crannies of our playgrounds. It is almost time to start planting and to see how things grow.

We will celebrate St Patrick's Day this month with our traditional Berrybrook Irish Soda Bread. We will even learn about rainbows! As March winds down we will be working on spring projects. All the children will have the opportunity to paint blown eggs, a Berrybrook tradition! Parents are asked to help us with this project by providing the empty egg shells we will use. We will conclude with an egg hunt and spring celebration in our classrooms.

During the month of March teachers will be meeting with parents for our final parent-teacher conferences. Once again, this is a great time to chat with teachers about your child's development. Teachers will inform you when sign-up sheets are available.

Happy Spring!  
Mrs. Barlow, Mrs. Capasso, Mrs. Delano,  
Mrs. Dunn, Mrs. McDonough, Mrs. Savoy

### Reminder!

Tuesday, March 15 is a  
Berrybrook Professional Day.  
There is no school for students

## Second Year Program News

February seemed to go by very quickly. We have had a milder winter this year, and so we were fortunate to have a good amount of time to play outdoors. The children were very creative decorating their special Valentine mail boxes, and enjoyed delivering valentine cards to friends within the class. We finished off the month with a visit from dental hygienist Claire Reilly, who demonstrated to us how to maintain good dental health.

In March, we look forward many Berrybrook Traditions:

To begin our traditional process of tapping the maple trees, we need ideal weather conditions with warm days and cold evenings. The maple sap will drip into special buckets on our Norway Maple tree for several days. Then, we will boil the sap which turns into maple syrup, and enjoy our Sugar on Snow Party!

Every year at Berrybrook children paint 'blown eggs.' It is a well loved tradition. We ask parents to participate in the project by providing the eggs. Seasoned Berrybrook parents know all about the process of blowing eggs, but an email with instructions will be sent to all families.

To celebrate St. Patrick's Day, the students will be experiencing Irish music and dance, making shamrock headbands, and baking Irish soda bread.

In addition to these traditions, this month second year students will study planets, space, and phases of the moon and will also be looking for signs of spring, like the robins that return to Berrybrook in the spring time. The children will be learning a song about a "red, red robin", with some related sign language.

## Red, Red, Robin

*When the red, red robin  
Comes bob, bob, bobbin'  
Along, along  
There'll be no more sobbin'  
When he starts throbbin'  
His own sweet song*

*Wake up, wake up, you sleepyhead  
Get up, get up, get out of bed  
Cheer up, cheer up, the sun is red  
Live, love, laugh and be happy*

*What am I to do, while I'm walking  
Through fields of flowers?  
Rain may glisten, but still I listen  
For hours and hours*

*I'm just a kid again  
Doin' what I did again  
Singin' a song  
When the red, red robin  
Comes bob, bob, bobbin' along*



The children are now beginning to have that more mature, “kindergarten look” to them and they delight in exploring in all areas of the curriculum and classroom. Learning is fostered through ideas in math, science, social studies, art and music on a daily basis. Social interactions among peers are enjoyable and satisfying. The children have built their skills of expressing their feelings and being good listeners!

Mrs. Caddle, Mrs. Fosdick,  
Mrs. LaForest, Miss McNulty, Mrs. Neal,  
Mrs. O’Neil, Mrs. Piccuito, Mrs. Rosen,  
and Mrs. Richardson



Don't Forget  
Summer Enrichment!  
The Berrybrook Summer Nature Program  
will be offered again this year during  
June and July,  
on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and  
Thursdays from 9:00 – 1:00.

## Berrybrook Parents Association

Welcome to March, Berrybrook families! February vacation is now behind us and although it has been a very mild winter (let's hope for no late storm surprises), we are hoping that spring is near. March is turning out to be a very busy month for BPA programming.

### Enrichment Update

March will bring two events to the children sponsored by the BPA. Yoga will continue for all classes this month with Kim Spires. To help celebrate St. Patrick's Day, the Haley School of Irish Dance will be sending dancers to demonstrate their skills sometime during the month. Be sure to ask your children to share their thoughts about these fun visits!

### BPA Facebook Page

We recently established a Berrybrook Parents Association Facebook group page for all current Berrybrook families to help us share information and events. Please be sure to look up our new Facebook page and click to join the group.

## Parents Night Out

### Inspire Kids Yoga

With Kim Spires

Workshop for Parents

Tuesday, March 29 7:00pm  
at Berrybrook School

In this workshop you will learn how to reinforce (or introduce) your children's yoga practice at home. Discover how to guide children through playful postures, breathing activities, mindfulness and relaxation techniques through song, stories and activities used in the Inspire Kids Yoga and Mindfulness program.

Learn strategies to ease anxiety, big emotions and sensory processing challenges. This interactive workshop will include take home materials detailing activities learned and a list of helpful resources to put to use immediately in your own home.

Led by Kim Spires, Founder, Inspire Kids Yoga, Berrybrook's Certified Childrens Yoga instructor

\$10 Donation, made payable to Berrybrook Parents Association. Please register at the BPA table by 3/25/2016

Thank you!

### Spring Fling

Each year the BPA sponsors a casual end of year celebration for all the families. Please save-the-date for this special event on Wednesday, May 18th from 4-6 p.m. with a rain-date of Thursday, May 19<sup>th</sup>. Be on the lookout for additional details regarding this fun afternoon!

## Family Fun

We have two dates for "Family Fun" outings in March. Please mark your calendars and sign up at the BPA table for the following events:

**Friday March 4<sup>th</sup> – My Gym Kingston** playdate from 2-3:30 pm. Cost is \$5/child payable at My Gym.

**Tuesday, March 15<sup>th</sup>** (Berrybrook Professional Day) – Please join us at the **Weymouth Club** from 10 am – 1 pm. We will spend two hours playing between their splash pad pool and the inflatables in their "Excitement Center". From 12-1pm, they will have a place for us to eat lunch near their café, so there is the option to either bring a bagged lunch or purchase lunch at the café. Parents **MUST** come in their swimsuits and be prepared to assist their children in the pool – it is a wade pool and very accessible for toddlers. Cost for the 3 hours is \$16/child. For this outing, we need to know the number of people attending by March 4<sup>th</sup> so that the Weymouth Club can plan for the amount of space we require. Please sign up and pay for this event at the BPA table ASAP !

## BPA Dues

The BPA has been very busy this year and we would like to thank all of the families who have paid their BPA dues. We could not plan these fun events for our children and families without your help. It is not too late for your family to support our work! All donations are very much appreciated. We suggest \$30 per family, but all amounts are welcome.

Please don't hesitate to reach out to any members of the BPA if you have any questions, comments, new ideas or concerns.

Thank you,  
Jill Cooney & Danielle MacKinnon

## Berrybrook Board of Directors

Last summer, while waiting in line for an ice cream, my son Owen spotted a little person next to us. Immediately he stretched out his arm, pointed his finger and said, "Mama, a lady that looks like a baby". My initial reaction was shock that he said it so clearly. My next reaction was to hush him and divert his attention. I was mortified. Then as I turned around and looked at this woman's eyes, I realized I was doing to this woman exactly what I wished others would not do to my son.

By quieting Owen and discouraging his questions, I was unintentionally creating fear and confusion for him while at the same time sending a signal to this woman that she made me uncomfortable. In such a moment of embarrassment, the easiest cure is typically to do nothing. Pretend it never happened, maybe give a brief smile and move on. However, I saw the pain in this woman's eyes and her polite smile. She knew the drill and likely experienced it every day.

I took a deep breath, walked over to her, and apologized for my son's reaction. I explained that while I could never fully understand, I felt I somewhat understood because of my son's speech disorder. She smiled and we talked for a bit, before I invited the boys over to introduce themselves and say hello. Once we all had our ice cream and said good bye, the woman turned to me and said, "Thank you. That was really nice of you to bring the boys over to say hello."

Owen is often on the other side of hushed comments or confused peers as children and adults alike have been sternly hushed, or pulled away from him when they asked questions or made inappropriate comments; *"Why does he talk like a baby?"*, *"What language is he speaking?"*, *"Why won't he talk to me?"*.

Owen has *Childhood Apraxia of Speech (CAS)*. Children with *CAS* have great difficulty planning and producing the precise and specific series of movements of the tongue, lips, jaw and palate that are necessary for intelligible speech. The child knows what he or she wants to say, but his/her brain has difficulty coordinating the muscle movements necessary to say those words. While we are hopeful that Owen will overcome *CAS*, (*in some cases, CAS can fade over years of hard work, while in other cases children need special education and struggle with CAS for life*), one of the lasting challenges can be learning delays based on struggles to make friends and frustrations from learning differently than others.

As parents, we learn from our children every day. Owen has taught me the value of going past simply being polite to parents of children with disabilities, and instead engaging them in open conversations. My past worries about offending these parents has faded. I now realize how much avoiding questions and conversations can feel hurtful, not polite. I've also become much more proactive celebrating differences and being open with my children. Being open and honest with children sends a message that differences are not only something not to be afraid of, they are opportunities to better understand others and meet new friends.

Jessica McFarland, Berrybrook Board of Directors

## Be A Blessing

As you all know Joanne LaForest is currently undergoing treatments for breast cancer for the second time. As part of her Christmas gift, her son Jesse organized a team in her honor for the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure® which is being held on Saturday, April 9 at Carson Beach in South Boston. The hope is for as many people as possible to walk together to support Joanne and breast cancer research. My family will be talking part in the walk, and Berrybrook would love to have as many participants as possible!

*Here are the directions from Jesse:*

1) Click on THIS link [https://secure2.convio.net/rfcc/site/TRR/Race/RaceBoston/372623338?pg=tfind&fr\\_id=1310&fr\\_tm\\_opt=existing&skip\\_login\\_page=true&s\\_promoCode=JOINTEAM](https://secure2.convio.net/rfcc/site/TRR/Race/RaceBoston/372623338?pg=tfind&fr_id=1310&fr_tm_opt=existing&skip_login_page=true&s_promoCode=JOINTEAM) or google "Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure Massachusetts Join or Form a Team". Then click Register and then Join a Team.

2) Our team name (as decided by the wonderful Joanne LaForest) is "Be A Blessing". So where it says "Team Name:", enter "Be A Blessing" and click on the "Search For Team" button.

3) Scroll down on the next page, and you'll see our team and you should also see Jesse's name next to the team. Click on "Be A Blessing". It will bring you to the next page.

4) Once on the next page, you'll see "Join Be A Blessing" in a grey box on the right side of your screen. Click it!

5) \*\*\*Now here is the important part\*\*\*

*Jesse selected "Adult UNTIMED". It's the 4th option down. That's what Jesse is suggesting you select when you register, that way we can all walk it together as one GIANT team.*

*However, if you want to be timed, then you select "Adult TIMED". Also if you fall under the youth category, select "Youth UNTIMED".*

*The rest is just entering your information to register.*

**If you are unable to join the walk on April 9, please consider sponsoring a walker (I'd love more sponsors!!) so that Be A Blessing can raise as much money as possible!**

I am happy to answer any questions. Please pass along this information to any alum family who may be interested.

Thanks!

Mrs. Watts